

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 4950
INFO AMCONSUL ISTANBUL IMMEDIATE
AMCONSUL IZMIR
AMCONSUL ADANA

C O N F I D E N T I A L ANKARA 5353

ISTANBUL FOR AMBASSADOR MACOMBER

EO 11652 GDS
TAGS: SNAR, TU
SUBJECT: OPIUM BAN RECISSION: MEETING WITH FORMIN GUNES

SUMMARY: ON EVE OF AMBASSADOR'S DEPARTURE FOR WASHINGTON, FORMIN GUNES OFFERS ASSURANCES THAT GOT INTENDS CONTROL OPIUM PRODUCTION, WELCOMES US AND UN ADVICE AND ASSISTANCE THIS REGARD, AND REITERATES HIGH IMPORTANCE GOT PUTS ON US FRIENDSHIP. AMBASSADOR ACCEPTS SINCERITY OF TURKISH INTENTIONS BUT EMPHASIZES DEEP US CONCERN AT RESUMPTION POPPY PRODUCTION AND INDICATES US-TURKISH RELATIONSHIP IN GRAVE JEOPARDY. END SUMMARY.

1. AFTER HAVING RECEIVED EMBASSY NOTE INFORMING MFA OF AMBASSADOR'S RECALL TO WASHINGTON, FORMIN GUNES ASKED AMBASSADOR TO SEE HIM EVENING JULY 5. DCM SPAIN ALSO PRESENT. AMBASSADOR LEFT FOR WASHINGTON IMMEDIATELY UPON CONCLUSION CONVERSATION AND SHOULD BE SHOWN THIS ACCOUNT SOONEST AFTER ARRIVAL AASHINGTON. GUNES BEGAN WITH REFERENCES TO HIS TALKS WITH SECRETARY KISSINGER IN OTTAWA, THE HAYES CASE, AND US COMPANY CONDUCTING SEISMIC EXPLORATION FOR GOT (SEPTELS). HE THEN PROCEEDED MAKE HOUR LONG PRESENTATION ON OPIUM.

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2. HIS MAIN THEME WAS THAT GOT, AND MOST SPECIFICALLY "HUMANITARIAN" PRIME MINISTER ECEVIT, MEANT WHAT HAD BEEN SAID ABOUT CONTROLS TO PREVENT ILLICIT LEAKAGE. THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE IS NOW WORKING ON A CONTROL PLAN. AS SOON AS PLAN IS READY IN DRAFT, USG AND OTHERS WILL BE NOTIFIED AND THEIR VIEWS AND RECOMMENDATIONS SOLICITED. MEANWHILE, A REQUEST HAS ALREADY BEEN MADE TO GENEVA FOR AT LEAST ONE UN EXPERT TO COME TO ASSIST WITH PLAN. SHOULD USG LATER WISH SEND EXPERT, GOT WOULD BE HAPPY RECEIVE HIM.

3. GUNES HIMSELF HAD JUST SPENT HOUR WITH MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE OFFICIAL AND QUESTIONED HIM CLOSELY TO MAKE SURE TO AVOID ANY LOOPHOLES. PRIMIN AND GUNES INTEND PUT HEAVY PRESSURE ON PEOPLE WORKING ON PLAN TO MAKE CERTAIN THERE ARE NO GAPS. THIS WAS A MATTER OF NATIONAL HONOR. PREVIOUS GOVERNMENTS HAD NOT ENFORCED BAN FULLY; THERE HAD BEEN LEAKS AND SOME ILLEGAL GROWING. THIS WOULD NOT HAPPEN AGAIN. TURKEY WAS GOING TO ENSURE COMPLETE CONTROL FOR ITS OWN SAKE. HOWEVER, HE WELL AWARE OF ATTITUDES IN US CONGRESS AND HOPED THESE REASSURANCES WOULD SET FEARS TO REST. IN ANY EVENT, HE DID NOT BELIEVE TURKISH-US FRIENDSHIP HAD RESTED EXCLUSIVELY ON THE OPIUM BAN. FOR HIS PART, HE DID NOT THINK THAT FRIENDSHIP WOULD BE DESTROYED EVEN IF CONGRESS WITHHELD AID, ALTHOUGH THERE WOULD BE NEGATIVE REACTION BY TURKISH PUBLIC OPINION.

4. EXCEPT FOR DISSENTING WHEN FORMIN SAID BAN HAD NOT WORKED UNDER PREVIOUS GOVERNMENTS, AMBASSADOR LISTENED UNTIL END OF PRESENTATION. HE THEN SAID HE WISHED TO READ MESSAGE THAT HAD SUMMONED HIM BACK TO WASHINGTON. HAVING DONE SO, HE SAID THAT THE US AND TURKEY WERE IN A VERY DIFFICULT AND SERIOUS SITUATION. USG DOES NOT QUESTION THE SINCERITY OF THE PRESENT--OR PREVIOUS--GOVERNMENTS, BUT THE TOTAL BAN HAD BEEN VERY EFFECTIVE AND HE SIMPLY DOUBTED ABILITY TO CLOSE OFF ALL LEAKAGE WHEN PRODUCTION RESUMED. THE PROBLEM WAS NOT

JUST WITH CONGRESS; THE EXECUTIVE BRANCH WAS ALSO DEEPLY DISTURBED. HE WOULD SEEK TO FIND A SOLUTION TO THE PROBLEM DURING HIS CONSULTATIONS BUT COULD NOT HONESTLY PREDICT THAT THIS WOULD BE POSSIBLE. MEANWHILE, HE COULD ONLY URGE THAT CONTROL PLAN

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THAT WAS BEING DEVELOPED LIMIT PRODUCTION TO SMALLEST POSSIBLE AREA AND "SURROUND THAT WITH ARMY."

5. GUNES REPEATED HIS HOPE THAT THE GOT WOULD BE ABLE TO AVAIL ITSELF OF THE HELP OF US EXPERTS "IN IMPLEMENTATION AS WELL AS DEVISING OF THE CONTROL PLAN--AS FAR AS IS POSSIBLE IN RELATIONS BETWEEN INDEPENDENT STATES." SAID IT WAS THE GOT'S INTENTION TO "START WITH A VERY LITTLE, GO TO A LITTLE MORE, AND THEN

STOP." CERTAINLY, HE THOUGHT, THE US AND TURKEY TOGETHER HAD ENOUGH ADMINISTRATIVE AND FINANCIAL CAPABILITY TO CONTROL ANY DAMAGE THAT MIGHT RESULT FROM RESUMPTION OF PRODUCTION. CERTAINLY ALSO, IT WOULD NOT BE GOOD FOR WORLD PEACE FOR ONE COUNTRY TO LEAVE THE IMPRESSION OF TRYING TO IMPOSE ITS WILL ON THE OTHER AND, WHEN THAT COULD NOT BE DONE, TO BREAK UP A VALUABLE ALLIANCE. HE WAS SURE THAT WITH GOOD WILL, STATEMANSHIP AND INTELLIGENCE ON BOTH SIDES, ALL WOULD COME OUT ALL RIGHT.

6. AMBASSADOR THANKED FORMIN FOR HIS PRESENTATION, SAID HE WOULD CONVEY IT TO WASHINGTON, BUT HE COULD NOT BE SO OPTIMISTIC. SADLY, US-TURKISH RELATIONS WERE IN GRAVE JEOPARDY; THEY WERE BAD AND MAY GET WORSE. HE COULD SAY NO MORE AT THIS TIME.

7. UPON LEAVING FORMIN'S OFFICE, AMBASSADOR AND DCM WERE APPROACHED BY REPORTER AND PHOTOGRAPHER FROM MASS CIRCULATION HURRIYET. IN RESPONSE TO QUERY AS TO WHAT HAD GONE ON, AMBASSADOR SAID THAT HE HAD CONVERSATION WITH FORMIN AT LATTER'S REQUEST ON EVE AMBASSADOR'S RECALL TO WASHINGTON FOR CONSULTATION. RETURN TO POPPY CULTIVATION WAS, OF COURSE, DECISION FOR GOT ONLY. HOWEVER, HE DEEPLY REGRETTED IT BECAUSE BAN HAD BEEN OF GREAT HELP TO U.S. WITH HEROIN PROBLEM AND ESPECIALLY BECAUSE GOT HAD CHOSEN NOT TO ACCEPT AVAILABLE ALTERNATIVE OF NEW PROGRAM OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FOR THE POPPY-GROWING REGION WHICH WOULD HAVE BEEN OF GREAT BENEFIT TO THE FARMERS, WHO HAD NEVER BEEN ABLE IMPROVE THEIR LOT THROUGH POPPY CULTIVATION.

MACOMBER

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